

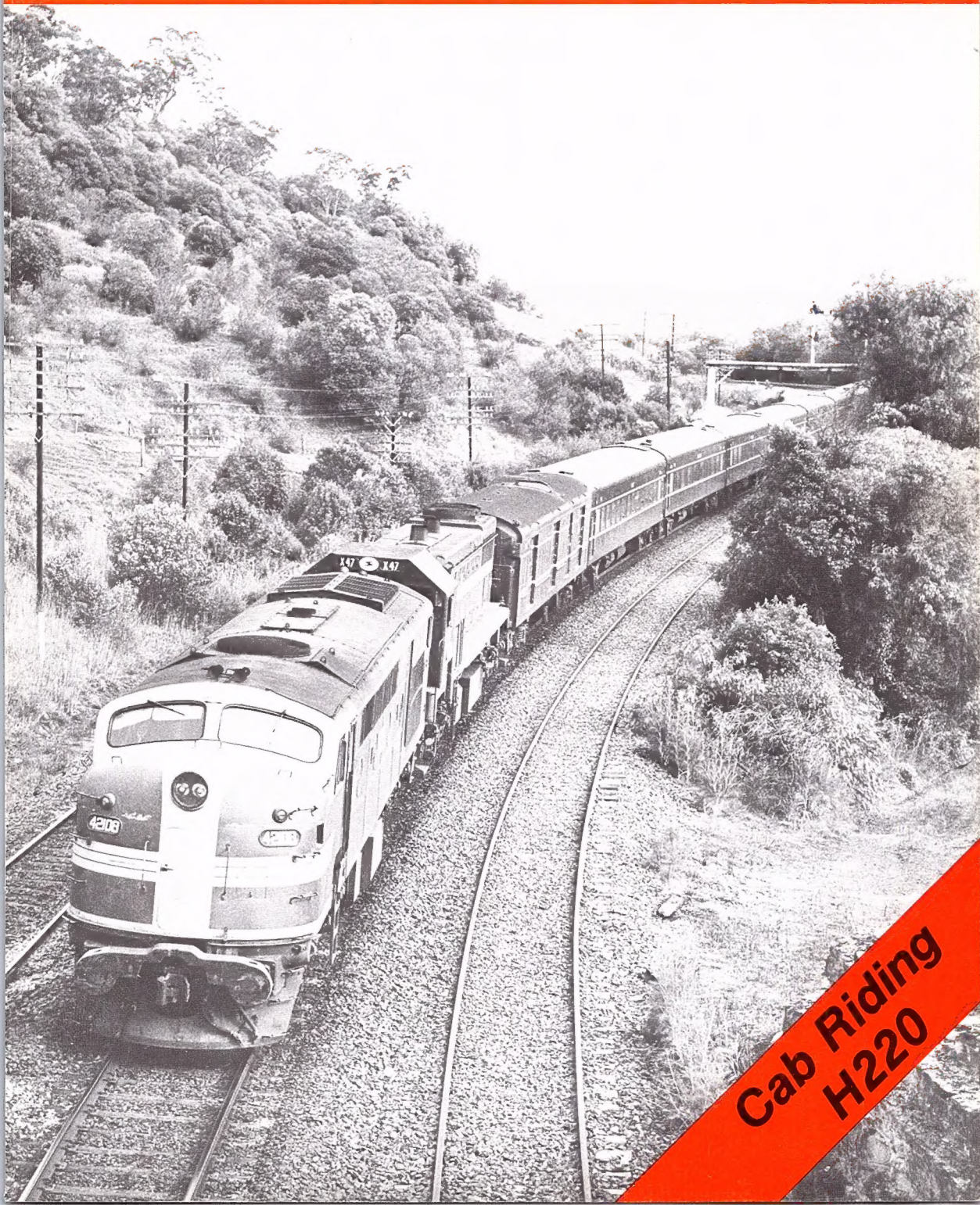
Newsrail

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Victoria's Modern Railway Magazine

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**Cab Riding
H220**



RICE TRAFFIC





Newsrail

Vol. 11 No. 3 April 1983

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of our recently retired Articles Editor, Geoff Bainbridge on Easter Saturday 2.4.83.

This month marks the Golden Jubilee of our Society, having been formed in Sydney in 1933 as the Australasian Railway & Locomotive Historical Society and changing to our current name in 1951.

A meeting held in September, 1945 formed a Victorian Branch (the term "Division" did not come into general use until 1956) and today there are Divisions of the Society in all States of Australia and the A.C.T. Total membership numbers well over 3,000 throughout Australia, with the Victorian total at 1,235.

We owe a very great debt to far sighted people early in the life of our Society who realised the need to preserve our railway heritage; and set up the Committees which are so strong today.

The Anniversary will be celebrated later this month in Sydney at a National Conference, Jubilee Dinner and other related activities.

If only we had a crystal ball to enable us to foretell what the next 50 years has in store for our Society.

Front Cover: 42108 leads X47 down into Picton at 08 28 on 27.12.82 as No.4 Up pass., the Spirit of Progress gets closer to Sydney. (Laurie Anderson)

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR NON-MEMBERS

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Opposite above: Y163 on an Up goods south of Denilquin on 25.10.82.

Opposite below: As the afternoon sun casts ever increasing shadows Y163 arrives at its destination, Echuca. (Both photos, L Sutton)

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1st of each month.

We would like to thank all who have contributed to this issue and look forward to your support in the future. All articles, items and photos are acknowledged at the bottom.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS (see p. 95)

How to Place your Advertisement: Using block letters include full name, address and phone number and send with cheque (no cash) payable to the ARHS to the Advertising Manager, Michael de Josselin, 6 Roymar Crt, Wonga Park, 3115. Closing date of Advertisements is the 18th of each month.

Charges: A minimum of \$2.50 per entry per month. A maximum of 5 words per line and a limit of 6 lines. If more than 6 lines are required a surcharge of 30 cents per line applies.

On the Footplate of "Heavy Harry"

The article below appeared in the *Argus* newspaper on 9th July, 1947 and was kindly forwarded to us by Harry Williams.

A night ride in the cab of Australia's biggest, fastest, and most powerful goods loco is a thrilling experience

Almost 8 o'clock in the evening.

"There she is", said Mr F Brown, Super of Loco Maintenance, Victorian Railways.

Dressed in overalls, and with photo equipment strung round me, I looked up in the smoke-filled atmosphere of the North Melbourne loco sheds and saw what appeared to be a black steel building towering over me. But I discovered it to be, instead, the largest loco I have ever seen outside a picture.

"That's 'Heavy Harry', Australia's most modern and powerful locomotive", said the SLM with, I gathered, a certain amount of pride in his voice as he regarded the Victorian Railways' one and only "H" class loco. "Come along and I will introduce you to the crew". Walking past a tender that was as large as a shunting engine, we came upon Percy Milne with oilcan in hand, doing his pre-run inspection of No.220.

Percy looked up and gave me a firm shake. He joined the railways as an engine cleaner in 1906, and has been a steam driver for the last 27 years.

"Have got to get this finished before we move out", he said; so, leaving him to finish, we moved off to meet the fireman. Walking round to the front of the loco we found him barely visible in the gloom and steam with the door of the smoke box open as he attended his part of the routine inspection that is done on each loco before it goes out on a job. He finished and came down to meet us.

He was a young man named Claude Larsen, and he has been with the railways for 10 years — his first as an engine cleaner, his last nine as fireman. He expects his promotion to drive in a few months. During the war he worked on what the troops in that part of operations will remember to the end of their days as the craziest railroad in the world, the Darwin - Birdum "Spirits of Salts".

We climbed up into the cab, which is seven feet above the ground, and with a short "whoo" from the whistle moved slowly out of the shed. Our train of 50 loaded trucks was already made up and awaiting us in the yard. It was still 40 minutes to starting time. The train guard came and checked his watch with Percy's, and the train examiner came and locked the regulator. This is a safety measure to prevent the train moving while he is examining it, and he removed it when his examination is through.

A green light showed ahead, and with another short "whoo" Victoria's crack express goods train, drawn by "Heavy Harry", moved out of Spencer St yards. "Heavy Harry" is 92 ft 5½ in long with tender, and when roadworthy weighs 260 tons. The tender carries 14,000 gallons of water and nine tons of coal. It burns two tender loads on the return run to Wodonga; that is, 18 tons of coal.

When the loco was built at Newport in 1940, thought was given to possible unification of gauges, and provision for this has been made in its construction. It can be changed to 4 ft 8½ in without trouble and structural alteration.

It leaves Melbourne Monday to Friday nights at 21 25, takes an 800-ton train load to Wodonga, picks up another train there, and returns to Melbourne about 5 o'clock the next evening, running to an express schedule all the time.

As we slid out through Ascot Vale a figure could be seen waving from the lighted doorway of a house alongside the line.

"That's a retired railwayman who waves to us every night as we move out", said Percy. "He waves to the 07 30 train in the morning also, so I am darned if he ever sleeps".

"Hope we get the green at Pascoe Vale", said Percy as we neared it. I wondered why till he explained, "Ahead of us is a one-in-fifty grade, known as 'Oliver's Bank'. In railway language it is a momentum grade; that is, a fully laden train needs to take it at as fast a speed as permissible, because a climbing start might prove too much for the engine, and, in addition, lines are made greasy by night dew". With a deep-throated bay from the whistle we passed Pascoe Vale at our permissible maximum speed of 45 mph — the limit speed for four-wheeled goods rollingstock on this line — and took 'Oliver's Bank' in our stride. Our train behind weighed 800 tons, compared with the 550 tons of the "Spirit of Progress".

I noticed that Claude, our fireman, was not shovelling coal into the firebox in the time-honoured manner of firemen. He was on his seat, his eyes peering out into the bright glare of our headlight, with an occasional glance up at the water gauge and steam gauge in front of him.

I soon found out the reason. No. 220 has a mechanical stoker; the coal is passed from the tender to the engine by a gigantic screw similar to that seen in the kitchen mincing machine. This passes up to the firebox, where it is then distributed evenly by powerful jets of steam. By the operation of cocks the fireman can direct the coal to any part of the firebox with just a twist of his wrist. The injector, which forces water into the boiler to keep it up to its correct level, is also his responsibility.

On the left side of the cab, or, as it is properly called, the driving side, Percy sat with eyes intent on the road. In front of him were the regulator, airbrake handles, steam gauge, sandbox control, reversing gear and the speed recorder, although railwaymen have certain other unofficial names for this recorder.

This is a rather wonderful device which records on a tape the speed, time and record of the engine's running; if the wheels slip on a greasy track it will even record the speed the wheels spin. It gives a complete running record of every trip, and, when examined, if it is seen that the driver has exceeded speed or running behind or ahead of time, he is asked for a "please explain".

I heard Percy call out to Claude a few times, and asked why. Claude explained that he was one of the good drivers that let their fireman know when they reach a down grade and throttle back to let the train coast; the fireman may not have noticed this, and so keeps building up steam pressure till suddenly the escape valve is blowing off steam and smoke is filling the cabin.

The cabin was dark, the only light showing being the shaded lamp illuminating the instruments dials, but occasionally the fireman would open the firebox door to check on his fire, and then the heat and glare became unbearable.

Some trouble is being experienced with poor grade coal, which clinkers up very quickly, and as a result the box has to be cleaned out over an ash pit at Benalla or Seymour. With good coal the run is made right through. Our first stop was at Seymour, to change guards. As the run to Seymour is mostly up-grade, the injector and mechanical stoker were working almost continually. We were only there five minutes, long enough to allow Percy to go round and check "220", which was now bathed in steam and fog.

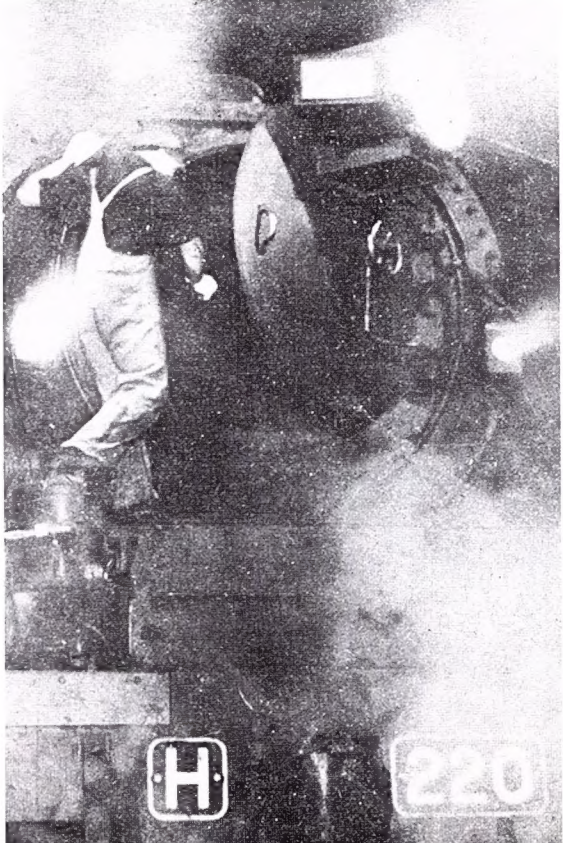
It was noticeable during the hilly run to Seymour that the driver did not just turn on steam and let the train go. It was a matter of throttle and brake work all the way to keep the speed as even as possible, no easy task and one for which a perfect knowledge of the track is essential. The noise in the cab is terrific, and the ride is rough, but thrilling. We slid into Benalla at 01.15 in the morning, where the relief crew took over, watered up, and took the crack goods on to Wodonga.

I had achieved a boyhood ambition at last, and nearly every non-railwayman in Victoria will envy me for it. Not only had I travelled on an engine, but I had gone on Australia's biggest, fastest, and most powerful modern goods loco.

Opposite: Fireman Larson stokes by turncock.

Below: Driver Percy Milne checks the loco over before run.

Below right: Claude Larsen "barely visible in gloom and steam".





Watering huge tender at Benalla.



Crews change over at Benalla.

Even though its days are numbered H220 makes an impressive picture as it leaves Wodonga at the head of a respectable train. 19.4.55. (Douglas A Colquhoun)



Country Carriage Working

N10: Problems in November included a shortage of buffet cars for Z sets, and a general shortage of airconditioned cars.

The MBS on the 06 10 Up Albury on Mon.1.11 was defective and detached at Benalla, causing a delay of 63 minutes. The three Albury/Swan Hill sets were often without buffets, and equally often failed to have the BEa/c as the fourth car. The following list shows some of the variations seen during November:

- 1.11: 19CE-7AZ-7BZ-14BE-54BE — 12 15 Albury
9CE-8AZ-3MBS-5BZ-52BEa/c — 17 20 Albury
- 5.11: 19CE-7AZ-7BZ-14BE-64BW — 12 15 Albury
- 6.11: 36CE-4AZ-3MBS-2BZ-60BES — 17 55 Albury
9CE-AZ-BZ-52BEa/c-70BWL — 18 05 Swan Hill
- 9.11: 36CE-4AZ-3MBS-2BZ-60BES — 17 20 Albury
19CE-7AZ-2MBS-7BZ-14BE — 12 15 Albury
- 12.11: 6CE-7AZ-2MBS-7BZ-14BE — 12 15 Albury
- 13.11: 36CE-4AZ-3MBS-2BZ-60BES — 17 55 Albury
- 19.11: 9CE-6BZ*-1MBS-3BZ-64BW — 06 10 Up Albury
6CE-7AZ-3MBS-2BZ-4BEa/c — 17 20 Albury
36CE-4AZ-2MBS-7BZ-52BEa/c — 17 40 Swan Hill

* — refurbished car — running as first class car.

On 16.11 the 16 25 Up Albury was X-VLPY-VLPY-CE-AZ-BE-BEa/c.

Three sets of CE-AS-BEa/c-BWL-BWL were scheduled to run to Kyneton, Dimboola and Numurkah. Only two sets were available at first and the Numurkah was non-airconditioned for most of the first week. A typical consist was 30CE-25AE-44BE-12BE-23BE on 1.1. However on Fri.5.11 the non-airconditioned set ran on the 15 25 South Geelong and 18 30 Bendigo (same run), and the N set normally used for these trains ran to Numurkah. On Sat.6.11 the 18 15 Numurkah was an N set, and the 18 10 Ballarat (scheduled N set) was non-airconditioned, after a last-minute transposal at Spencer St. The first run of the 16 10 Bendigo on Sunday was with a non-airconditioned set, but this train had the correct cars the following week.

While MBS and MRS cars were out of service, *Taggerty* was used on one of the *Vinlander* sets.

The spare airconditioned set SP1 appeared in various forms. It lost its buffet and AS car at times. On Sun.7.11 the 16 15 Ballarat (scheduled non-airconditioned) was 1BCE-31AW-1BG-2BW-39BE, which looks like SP1 modified a bit; 6 days later the 16 40 Up

Albury had an enlarged version: VLPY135-1BCE-31AW-Murray-1BG-2BW-39BE.

With the availability of DRCs suspect, a circular was issued showing loco-hauled passenger trains on all Seymour services except on the 16 05 Up Saturday. The 12 35 Down on Saturday is a pass. hauling a DERM; the DERM returns at 16 05. This is instead of coupled 600s on the 18 35 Down (a coupled set has to run to balance the service). The 600s made only occasional appearances at Seymour, usually on Friday or Saturday nights. In contrast to earlier days, when the 600 schedules were run by a loco and two railmotor trailers, the substitute trains were usually full passenger sets of, say, CW-AE-BW-BW. One exception was on Fri.12.11 when the 18 55 Down was T340-32AW-4BCE-VLPY105. As the AW had no brackets for lamps, 19CE (in Seymour yard off the parcels train) was added at the rear for the 21 00 Up trip. On Sat.27.11 the 12 35 Down was T382-T388-20BE-18AE-5BCE-56RM.

The Down Numurkah train on Sat.27.11 had the unusual consist of B74-32BW-39BE-1AZ-1BCE-VLPY121.

All four Traralgon sets had AS cars shown, with the proviso that AEs would be used if necessary. In practice two out of the four sets had the AS at the start of November.

N12: Roster N12 was due to start on Sat.18.12. The principal features are the introduction of the next two N sets (which means 4 additional BRN cars are available) and the disappearance of the "traditional" airconditioned set. The new N sets run on the evening Numurkah and Dimboola trains. BRN buffets operate on these trains and also on the 08 35 Warrnambool on Mon. to Fri. as well as on Sat., and on the Sunday Numurkah train.

The only remaining sets with AS-BEa/c are now the two sets based at Kyneton, and they are both BCE-AS-BEa/c-BEL. One of these now runs on the 12 30 Ballarat on Mon. to Fri. One set is worked to Melbourne as a second set on the Up local Saturday morning, and is then attached to the 18 25 Warrnambool to provide extra accommodation on the 17 00 Up Sun. It returns to Kyneton empty on Monday morning (this move started in November). With a buffet N set available for the 13 45 Bendigo Sat., the morning arrival from Bairnsdale can now be used for the 12 25 to Traralgon and return, providing airconditioned cars, although the buffet is not operated.

Sun.9.5.82 finds T400 stabled at Sale at the head of the 07 10 Up Melbourne pass. for Monday, while T373 prepares to depart on the 13 18 Bairnsdale pass. (Roderick B Smith)



Wedding Train with a Difference

JOHN DARE

The *Puffing Billy* fleet of locomotives have played many different roles in their day, from hauling railway enthusiast specials, being in films and television commercials, carrying VIPs, as well as the thousands of children and adults who continue to return time and time again for the nostalgic and scenic trip through the Dandenongs. Another occasional role of *Puffing Billy* is the operation of wedding trains.

When Norm De Pomeroy's daughter, Leonie, became married to Greg Moran on Sunday, 19th December, 1982 it was decided that something different would be arranged for the celebrations and reception. With Norm (a VicRail driver) regularly driving *Puffing Billy*, and his son, Geoffrey, (also a VicRail driver) regularly firing on *Puffing Billy*, this was a perfect opportunity to have a wedding train. The only difference being that instead of being "*Puffing Billy's* chauffeur" this time they would be "chauffeured on *Puffing Billy*".

At about 16 30 on Sun.19.12, after the vows had been taken everyone met at the Belgrave narrow gauge station. In the platform was loco 6A freshly spruced up with white streamers and behind it a neat four carriage train with two ex Mount Lyell railway observation carriages in the consist. After posed photos were taken with the wedding party alongside the driver and fireman dressed in bowler hats all was then ready for departure. The train left by 16 45 and a smart run with the light load was made to Menzies Creek where the train waited to cross the afternoon train ex Lakeside. More posed photos were taken before 7A arrived enabling its passengers to see this unusual sight.

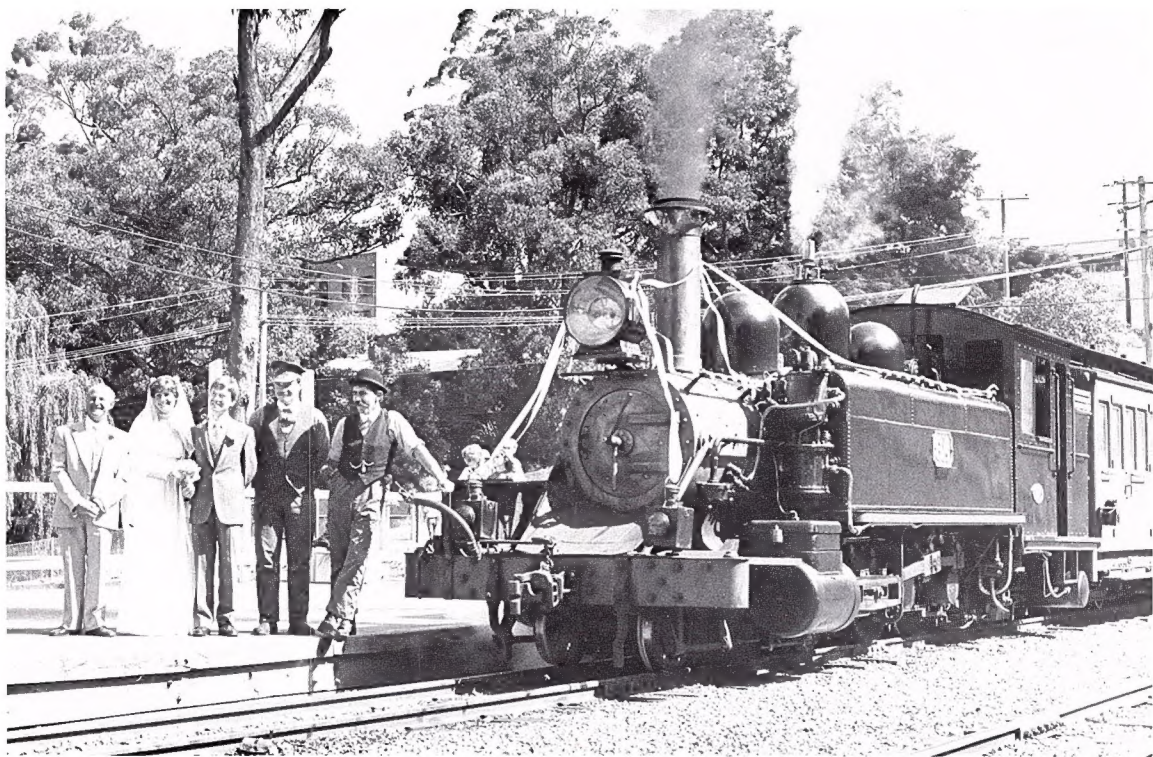
Quickly safeworking formalities were completed and the wedding special was on its way again. On the Down side of Clematis station the train halted at the level-crossing to enable the wedding party to alight. The wedding party farewelled the train on its way to Lakeside with the other guests to complete their ride, then the wedding party strolled down the road for a short walk to the residence of Mr and Mrs Stephenson, whose spacious gardens enabled the party to have appropriate wedding record photos taken.

By 18 00 the photos had been taken and the party then walked back to Clematis station to welcome the train back from Lakeside. On arrival all the guests then alighted and went up to the nearby Clematis Hotel where the reception was held. Finally in the later hours of the evening everyone once again rejoined the train for a pleasant summer's evening run back to Belgrave. No doubt a jolly time was had by all, in particular being able to participate in this "different" way of getting to a wedding reception.

Opposite above: Mecca of thousands of photographers, the famous trestle bridge plays host to the wedding special.

Opposite below: The peaceful setting of Clematis sees the wedding party farewell their guests to Lakeside, whilst their photographs were taken in the nearby gardens of Mr and Mrs Stephenson.

Below: 6A decked out in white streamers for the wedding special for Leonie and Greg Moran at Belgrave. From left to right are Norm de Pomeroy (bride's father), the newly weds, and ETRB crew Malcolm Davidson and Rodney Martin. (All photos, John Dare)





No Wheat Today

NORM HOUGHTON

As is known by now, the 1982-1983 wheat season was seriously affected by drought. Victorian production was down to 10% of normal, and the effects on rail operations and revenue were in a similar vein. The prospects of seeing anything of note in the wheat belt were dim, but the bad news, as well as the good, is worth a few lines, so the writer fuelled car and camera and headed north from Geelong on 28th December, 1982.

The GEB terminal at North Geelong has stood down or dispensed with the services of three-quarters of its staff, and little was to be seen there — all the rail tracks were empty, and only four rakes of GHs and GYs were present in the North Geelong yards.

Moving north-west across the plains to Maroona the effects of the drought were very much in evidence, with paddocks eaten down to earth and farmers, carting water. The silos at Berrybank had a rake of GYs alongside, but no staff were working. The harvest was a little early due to the unusual climatic conditions, and since most of the miniscule production has been retained on the farms for seed or stock feed there has not been much work for silo staff. Silos opened on a restricted basis only. Spare rail truck capacity was noted at several locations.

The Gheringhap - Maroona line is receiving the attentions of the relaying gang, and near Derinallum the existing 90 lb rail is being replaced by the 94 lb plant. Onwards to Maroona we proceeded without sighting anything of interest. A long rake of GYs, empty and without tarpaulins, stood in No.3 road. The silo was deserted and silent.

The public holiday prevailing that day kept railway activity to a minimum and ensured the Ararat loco depot was flush with engines, several of which were receiving attention by the fitters. Locos "in residence" were S304, T325-339-346-354-374-382-383-393, Y139-144-156-157 and W263. The only wheat traffic in evidence was two rakes of trucks in the goods yards.

Stawell yard was bare of anything except for three VHGY hoppers as we turned north to have a look at the Bolangum line. This line is due for re-building and has not seen a train for the last few seasons. Perhaps it has been re-laid and is being used by trains? The answer to our question is simple — it hasn't and it isn't.

All of the silos on this line are in use, and road transport is employed to empty them. Gravel has been placed over the rail lines to allow road trucks access to the silo unloading chutes. The condition of the rail track is one of unbelievable decay, but one surprise is a relatively new concrete culvert bridge near Banyena station.

We then cut across from Rupanyup to Murtoa. The Marmalake wheat terminal had only small rakes of GH and VHGY wagons in its sidings. No engines were present in Murtoa yard when we passed by at 14 30.

The Hopetoun line was inspected next and was almost as quiet as everything seen to date. Coromby and Minyip silos each had a rake of GYs lined up for filling, and GEB staff were on the job at the latter point. Several growers' motor trucks were in the station yard.

A very long string of empty GY wagons was stabled in No.2 road at Sheep Hills, doing nothing and going

nowhere for the present. RT34 was noted at War-racknabeal along with a trivial number of GY and GH trucks alongside the silo. The only other activity on the rest of the line to Patchewollock was at Beulah, where a few GYs were present.

The almost complete lack of activity at this time of the year was certainly unusual and a little strange. Normally the station yards would be dusty centres of motor truck queues, with long rakes of rail wagons creaking under their loads in the sidings. The GEB operators would be dancing along the tops of rail trucks, slamming lids and waving to anyone in sight, while on the ground the wheat growers would stand around in knots, discussing nothing in particular or admiring the newest truck in the queue or, when conversation flagged, grumble at the VR for not delivering sufficient empty trucks quickly enough to their particular silo. But not this season.

Turning east, we motored across to the Mildura line. Again, there was little happening at the stations between Lascelles and Ouyen. Turiff had some GYs. Sand drifts, almost engulfing the line at Speed, were reminders of the drought as we drove on through the pouring rain of an unseasonal squall.

Ouyen was reached at 18 30. This normally busy junction outpost of the VR was dead. The yard was nearly devoid of traffic. RT8 was the only motive power in sight. A check with local informants revealed that the district's harvest was just a shade off zero, with disastrous effects on rail operations. In normal harvest times railway staff work round the clock, with the exception of Sundays and Christmas Day. Not so this season. Some staff at Ouyen were sent on leave due to lack of business.

Next morning we observed the *Vineland*'s arrival a few minutes early at 05 45 and departure on time at 05 59. X42 and T353 provided the engine power. Fleeing the town before the searing temperatures in these parts killed the clogged radiator on the writer's ageing vehicle, we motored south to Donald.

Woomelang yard contained two rakes of empty GYs, some without tarpaulins, and only one GY under the silo chutes. Birchip station was totally empty of vehicles as we passed by in the growing heat, our volcanic radiator rumbling in an ominous fashion. A few GYs and some GHs were spotted at the silos in Morton Plains, Watchem and Litchfield, but no GEB staff or growers were about. The Litchfield station office has recently been re-painted, and looked resplendent in a sea of stunted patchy wheat crops.

We pulled into Donald at 10 00, just in time to observe the day's first loco action. T377, T408 and Y150 were at the depot, but there was practically nothing in the yard. A handful of GH wagons was standing loaded at the silo, and three guard's vans on the other side of the yard were hopefully waiting for some trains to be conjured up for them to be attached to.

Y150 began making up a couple of short trains, one to Ouyen, another to Maryborough, comprising all of the loaded wheat trucks. T377 and T408 coupled to the Maryborough train. We did not observe the above two departures at around 12 00-12 30 as we were disporting ourselves on the town's attractions and obtaining temporary relief from the heat.



"Coals to Newcastle". Importing grain into Geelong rarely happens, but in this season of drought, the "Iron Sturt" is bringing barley to Geelong. Y132 helps out with the unloading. Sat.22.1.83. (Roger Gillard)

On returning to the station at 13 30 we found newly-arrived Up and Down trains. X40 on a short wheat train was heading south, and of interest in its consist was a sparkling wagon, GH800, with a new type of top hatch. T406 on a north-bound train of empty GHs departed at 13 45, and soon after this X40 headed off.

We moved on at this point. The silo at Swanwater was open for receivals and had a goodly rake of GYs in evidence — the only real harvest activity we were to observe south of Donald. The St. Arnaud silo was also open for business, but the scale of operations was trifling. There were two growers' trucks at the weighbridge and one GY under the silo chutes.

Things picked up a little at Dunolly as we trundled by at 15 45. T338 arrived from Maryborough on a lengthy string of GH wagons and added more to make what was the longest train seen so far, around 60 vehicles, before continuing on to Donald. The Dunolly yard pilot, usually a Y class, was conspicuous by its absence, another casualty (we supposed) of the drought. Two lengths of GY and VHGY wagons were at the sub-terminal.

Continuing south in the oppressive heat, to the tune of effervescent protests coming from a groaning radiator that made train-chasing a chimera, we noted T377 at Bet Bet, returning to Donald from Maryborough with a load of empty GYs. Maryborough loomed up at 16 10 and, like most other places, had an almost empty yard. Pilot Y150 and T358 were both shut down.

The south-bound train we had noted earlier in the day at Donald was plugging along just ahead of us, and we scored a meeting near Tourello at 16 40 when T408 and T378, at the head of an augmented GY consist, passed by. This train paused at Creswick to cross a north-bound train of petrol tankers behind an unidentified X class that hurried past at such a rate as to suggest Mildura had run out of petrol over the Christmas break.

We sighted no more grain movements that day, and finished our inspection at this point. The 1982-1983 wheat season can be summed up as one of minimal rail activity combined with relatively short train lengths. Here's hoping it is not repeated.



NIGHT SHIFT ON THE WESTERN LINE

Above: The crew have just stepped off C509 as it idles away at Ballarat at the head of the 21 45 Down goods ex Dynon, Adelaide bound. Thurs.23.12.82.

Opposite: X40 waits line at Warrenheip while hauling the Up *Fruit Flyer* ex Mildura, 02 50. Thurs.23.12.82.

Below: With the Down home arrival signal pulled off for the straight, X40 has to wait its turn to enter the single line section. Ballan, 04 00. (All photos, Mal Austin)





Turntables, Triangles and Traversers

DARRYL GREGORY



The remains of the old North Melbourne loco shed. (VicRail M.9706)

On p.305 of our December 1981 edition, we had a reader's query concerning turntables. Darryl Gregory of Wangaratta has put in a lot of work and submitted the following.

The following locations of Turntables, Reversing Loops, Triangles, etc. for the period 1950-1969 are based on information extracted from *Directory of Stations*, issues A650/50, 1.5.1950; A515/57, 10.6.1957; A835/62, 16.7.1962; A1033/66, 1.7.66; and A904/69, 7.6.1969.

26 ft. turntables: for turning AEC railmotors existed at Fawcner, Heathcote, Linton, Morwell, Somerton (on dead end Fawcner line) and Tongala in 1950, but all were removed from service by the 1957 issue.

50 ft. turntables: 1950 locations were: Ballarat, Boort, Briagalong, Bright, Cathkin, Clarkefield, Coleraine, Dookie, Everton, Forrest, Foster, Goroke, Hopetoun, Koroit, Lancefield, Maldon, Mortlake, Murchison East, Queenscliff, Redesdale, Tallangatta (old Tallangatta station), Thorpdale, Timboon, Toolamba, Wahgunyah, Waubra, Wesleydale and Yackandandah.

The 1957 issue shows that turntables still existed at Cathkin, Clarkefield, Coleraine, Dookie, Everton, Goroke, Koondrook, Koroit, Maldon, Mortlake, Murchison East, Queenscliff, Thorpdale, Toolamba and Wahgunyah. By 1962 turntables still existed at Dookie, Everton, Koondrook, Maldon, Mortlake, Queenscliff and Wahgunyah, but all were listed as 'Out of Use'. By 1966, 'Out of Use' turntables remained at Koondrook, Maldon, Mortlake, Queenscliff and Wahgunyah, but by 1969 only the turntables at Koondrook, Mortlake, and Queenscliff remained.

53 ft. turntables: 1950 locations: Alexandra, Avoca, Bacchus Marsh, Bairnsdale, Balmoral, Balranald,

Bealiba, Beechworth, Birregurra, Branhholme, Casterton, Cobram, Cohuna, Cudgewa, Dandenong, Deniliquin, Heywood, Katamatite, Koo-Wee-Rup, Kulwin, Maffra, Manangatang, Mansfield, Mirboo North, Mordialloc, Navarre, Nayook, Newport Workshops, Noojee, Numurkah, Orbost, Piangil, Picola, Rainbow, Red Hill, Robinvale, Rushworth, Sea Lake, Shelley, Shepparton, Skipton, Springhurst, Stony Point, Stratford, Tallarook, Tooborac, Wangaratta (dual gauge 5'3"/2'6"), Warburton, Yarram, Yarrawonga and Yea.

By 1957, turntables were still in existence at Alexandra, Bairnsdale, Balmoral, Balranald, Bealiba, Beechworth, Birregurra, Branhholme, Bright, Casterton, Cobram, Cohuna, Cudgewa, Dandenong, Deniliquin, Heywood, Katamatite, Koo-Wee-Rup, Kulwin, Maffra, Manangatang, Mansfield, Mirboo North, Nayook, Newport Workshops, Numurkah, Orbost, Piangil, Picola, Rainbow, Robinvale, Rushworth, Sea Lake, Shelley, Shepparton, Skipton, Springhurst, Stony Point, Stratford, Tallangatta (new Tallangatta, formerly Bolga station), Tallarook, Timboon, Tooborac, Wangaratta, Warburton, Yarram, Yarrawonga and Yea.

In 1962, 53 ft. turntables (*denotes 'Out of Use'), could be found at Alexandra, Bairnsdale*, Balmoral, Balranald, Beechworth, Branhholme, Bright, Casterton, Cobram, Cohuna, Coleraine, Cudgewa, Deniliquin, Goroke, Heywood, Katamatite, Kulwin, Maffra, Manangatang, Mansfield, Mirboo North, Murchison East, Newport Workshops, Numurkah, Piangil, Picola, Rainbow, Robinvale, Rushworth, Sea Lake, Shelley, Shepparton, Skipton, Springhurst, Stony Point*, Stratford, Tallangatta, Timboon, Tooborac, Toolamba, Wangaratta, Warburton, Yarram*, and Yarrawonga.

□ CONTINUED ON PAGE 82



Silver City Comet in Victoria

Above: The *Silver City Comet* has just about arrived in Melbourne as it drops down the North Melbourne flyover. Sat.19.2.83. (Hugh Webster)

Centre pages: The *Comet* set and S311 at the head of the ARHS special depart Wallan on a parallel photo run as the *Comet* set heads for home. Sun.20.2.83. (Mark Sherwin)

Below: The Great Dividing Range has just been crossed at Heathcote Junction and the *Comet* starts to stretch its legs on the downhill run to Wandong. Sun.20.2.83. (R P Dunbar)







□ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 78

By 1966, turntables still existed at Alexandra, Bairnsdale*, Balmoral, Balranald, Beechworth, Branholme, Bright, Casterton, Cohuna, Coleraine, Cudgewa, Deniliquin, Goroke, Heywood, Katamatiti, Kulwin, Maffra, Manangatang, Mansfield, Mirboo North, Murchison East, Newport Workshops, Numurkah, Piangil, Picola, Rainbow, Robinvale, Rushworth, Sea Lake, Shelley, Shepparton, Springhurst, Tallangatta, Timboon, Tooborac, Wangaratta, Yarrawonga and Yea.

By 1969, turntables remained at Balmoral, Balranald, Cohuna, Deniliquin, Goroke, Kulwin, Manangatang, Mansfield, Newport Workshops, Numurkah, Piangil, Picola, Rainbow, Robinvale, Sea Lake, Shepparton, Skipton, Tallangatta*, Tallarook, Toolamba, Wangaratta*, Yarrawonga and Yea.

70 ft. turntables: ([d] denotes dual gauge, [e] denotes electrically operated) In 1950 were located at Ballan, Ballarat East (2), Benalla, Bendigo, Camperdown, Castlemaine, Colac, Daylesford, Dimboola, Donald, Echuca, Elmore, Frankston, Geelong [e], Hamilton, Healesville, Horsham, Inglewood, Kerang, Korong Vale, Korumburra, Leongatha, Lilydale, Maryborough, Flinders St, Mildura, Moe [d], Mornington, Murrayville, Murtoa, North Ballarat Workshops, North Bendigo Workshops, Nyora, Ouyen, Port Fairy, Portland North, Quambatook, Sale, Seymour, St. Arnaud, State Mine, Stawell, Swan Hill, Tocumwal, Traralgon, Ultima, Warracknabeal, Waragul, Warrnambool, Woodend, Woomelang, and Wycheproof.

In 1957, additional 70 ft. turntables are shown at Bacchus Marsh, Foster and Hopetoun, each replacing a smaller turntable, whilst Flinders St now has two 70 ft. turntables. 1962 issue shows that turntables have been removed/deleted from Elmore and one from Ballarat East, leaving one at that location. Turntables at Frankston, Moe and Mornington are shown 'Out of Use', whilst turntables at Benalla, Bendigo, Geelong, Maryborough, Seymour and Traralgon are shown as 'Electrically Operated'. The 1966 issue shows that the turntables at Frankston and Moe have been deleted whilst 70 ft. turntables now appear at Dynon, two electric (being one each for broad and standard gauge) and Wodonga (electric).

By 1969, 70 ft. turntables remained at Bacchus Marsh, Ballarat East, Benalla, Bendigo [e], Castlemaine, Colac, Daylesford, Dimboola, Dynon 2 [d],

Foster, Geelong [e], Healesville, Hopetoun, Horsham, Kerang, Korong Vale, Flinders St 2, Mildura, Mornington [d], Murrayville, Murtoa, North Ballarat Workshops, North Bendigo Workshops, Nyora, Ouyen, Quambatook, Seymour [d] [e], St Arnaud, State Mine, Swan Hill, Tocumwal, Traralgon [e], Ultima, Warracknabeal, Warrnambool, Wodonga [e], Woomelang and Wycheproof.

The longest turntable in Victoria, is the 85 ft. electrically operated turntable at Ararat Loco.

Reversing Loops: Beech Forest 1950, 1957; Wodonga 1950-1962.

Triangles: In 1950 Triangles existed at Meringur, Moulamein, Pinaroo, Stony Crossing, Wakool and Yallourn. Stony Crossing was deleted by 1957, whilst Meringur and Pinaroo were deleted by 1969, leaving only Moulamein, Wakool and Yallourn with Triangles at 1969.

Truck Traversers: The 1950 Station Directory shows a Truck Traverser at Geelong Pier, but this is not shown in Directories from 1957 onwards.

Miscellaneous: In 1950, North Melbourne is shown with 3 x 70 ft. turntables at the Loco, whilst as from 1957 a Loop joins the facilities. These facilities are shown up to 1969. Serviceton is shown with a 70 ft. turntable and Triangle from 1950-66 issues, but as from the 1969 issue, only the Triangle is shown.

Wallan is shown in the 1950 and 1957 issues as having two turntables, one being 53 ft. whilst the other is 70 ft. 1962 and 1966 issues show only the 70 ft. turntable, which had been deleted by the 1969 issues.

Note: Benalla turntable removed in 1981 and forwarded to Dynon as a replacement. Turntable has not been replaced at Benalla.

R720 is turned at Sale during the early 1960s after arriving on a fan trip special. (Barry Eadie)

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General News

New Federal Government: On Sat.5.3, the people of Australia elected a Labor Government to run Australia for at least the next three years. It will be interesting to see as time goes on what impact a more pro-rail Government will have on Australia's railway systems. Certainly the Darwin standard gauge link will continue but the main interstate trunk routes are also in need of upgrading. We are seeing the steady but what seems to be very slow progress of relaying the main Serviceton line but the main Albury line is also in need of relaying to bring it up to today's demanding standards. Dare we hope that extra funds will be made available to speed up the Serviceton line and commence on the standard gauge track?

It is worth mentioning here that just prior to the elections, the Victorian Minister of Transport, Mr Crabb, was critical of the then Federal Government as it had failed to commit itself to further funds to allow upgrading to proceed. Over the last five years the State Government had received loans totalling \$19.1 million. However Mr Crabb points out that to be really effective the rail lines of Australia need hundreds of millions of dollars spent on them. The bulk of the loans granted to Victoria have been spent on the Melbourne to Serviceton relaying work. Additional funds were urgently needed to continue work on this important project Mr Crabb said. It would be totally irresponsible and inefficient to have to suspend work because of a lack of money now that the project has proceeded so far. It is relevant therefore to record the Labor Party's general policy on rail transport in Australia:

Upgrade and maintain designated railway routes of national importance, including the completion of the programme of standardisation of inter-capital links.

- * Make grants to the States, to enable them to operate, co-ordinate, expand and upgrade public passenger transport.
- * Build and/or operate any facilities and services relating to railways . . . as provided by the Constitution or transferred to the Australian Government by a State.
- * Develop a comprehensive national policy covering the carriage of inter-system railway freight.
- * Continue the funding and construction of new railways to unserved regions where required and where justified.
- * Initiate discussions with the relevant States to strengthen the role of the Railways of Australia Committee and/or establish a National Railways Council.
- * Subject to contemporary budgetary constraints provide financial assistance to the States for: the upgrading of port and rail facilities for export commodities; the purchase of Australian manufactured rollingstock; the upgrading of mainline railway systems.

Now that the major Australian States of NSW, Victoria, SA and WA are now under the control of a Labor Government it will be interesting to see if the Federal Labor Government offers to take over all Australian railway systems. Queensland of course would be a problem but as that State is composed of narrow gauge lines its exclusion would not present any

real drawback. The yellow and green colours of AN may stretch from Brisbane to Perth. The State Labor Government's will certainly dispose of a financial headache if the offer (if made) is accepted. (KW)

Train radios: Over 110 locomotives have now been fitted with radio communications between the driver and the guard. Work is proceeding on fitting radio to locos at the rate of about two per day. The second phase, installation of communications between a control centre on each line and trains was well advanced. The main Adelaide and Albury line will be provided with train to base radio on all services by the end of June. A total of 44 base stations will be completed by then and 120 base stations will be in service by the end of 1984. The cost of the radios on the total program will be \$6 million.

Flinders St clocks: Flinders St station's famous clocks are poised to enjoy their finest hour. A State Government investigation has found they can be electronically linked to VicRail's computer network. The 13 clocks will now not only be retained, but also restored. The restoration program, which also includes repainting the train destination signs under each clock, will cost about \$65,000, and will be completed soon.

A small black box known as a PIDS (Passenger Information Destination Services) will be installed high in the dome of the station and relay the electronic signals from VicRail's Metrol computer to the clocks. One clock was removed several weeks ago for testing, and will be the first to be linked up to ensure the system is faultless.

Fare evaders caught: Teams of VicRail inspectors nabbed 716 commuters in the first week of the State Government's crackdown on fare evasion. The passengers were fined a total of more than \$35,000 according to official Ministry of Transport figures. The blitzes began in February and coincided with the introduction of tough new penalties, including \$50 on-the-spot fines.

Another railways group: During the coming months an ever-increasing number of railway staff and freight clients will hear mention of the term "INTRANS". What exactly is INTRANS? The Railways of Australian Intersystem Transport Operating Plan — to give INTRANS its full title — has been founded on detailed analysis of the changing requirements of rail freight operations, and uses to advantage the technology now available through electronic media.

Basically INTRANS will offer considerable improvement to long distance interstate rail freight movements in Australia, with the intent of achieving and sustaining a high standard of service reliability across Australia. To do this INTRANS will incorporate:

- * Planning of through train loads between cities.
- * Intersystem working of locomotives.
- * Standardisation of train examination procedures.
- * Improvements in freight terminals.
- * Centralised transit monitoring of intersystem wagons.

All Australian Railway Systems have worked together closely over the development of the plan, and project teams involved in the development have been motivated by the basic transport requirements of railway freight customers.

Steel slump means more rail business: A victim of the steel slump has been BHP's fleet of 21 ships, many of which are specially designed to carry iron ore and steel. The Ro-Ro ships, which moved steel products between Port Kembla, Melbourne, Bell Bay in Tasmania and Adelaide and Whyalla, needed big volumes and frequent usage to be economic.

They have the capacity to carry between them about 800,000 tonnes of steel a year. In 1981 it made good economic sense carrying 665,000 tonnes but, on present usage and expectations for the rest of 1983, the ships would carry slightly less than 300,000 tonnes this financial year. Ironically, the Ro-Ro ships were built (in BHP's own shipyards) as a cheaper and more reliable alternative to railway and road transport. At the time, rail strikes occasionally were playing havoc with BHP's delivery schedules.

Now the railways will be delivering the bulk of the 300,000 tonnes of steel that would have been transported by Iron Duke and Iron Monarch. Only a small part of this steel will be transported by road or by conventional BHP ships. (Conventional ships can be used in the event of rail strikes.) Both ships will soon be up for sale but their buyers will need to equip them with more fuel-efficient engines. Apart from the engines, both ships are up to modern standards.

Double line needed: The Whittlesea Council has prepared a detailed submission it hopes the Government will heed supporting double line from Keon Park to Epping. The submission also seeks an examination into the possibility of extending the service to Mernda. (KW)

A Hurstbridge line commuter's view: The month of February 1983 began "well" with a point failure at Greensborough on 3.2. The 0744 Up Hurstbridge

arrived on time at Eltham at 08 00. An announcement was made advising of the point failure and that the train would be late departing. We left Eltham 16 late and arrived at the Greensborough Home signal. A further wait occurred while a Tait set was "called on" into the single line section and then set back into the other platform. This movement placed the Tait set at the Up platform to enable it to run to Flinders St. We then followed the Tait set into No.1 platform, docking at 08 36 (29 late). Departure from Greensborough was at 08 44 (37 late) with a further 4 lost at the offending point — trailing Up-Down crossover. By the time we got to Watsonia we were now 43 late but picked up 2 minutes by Heidelberg where 1 minute was promptly lost at the platform while the future of the "express" was sorted out. We ran express to Ivanhoe (i.e. non-stop Eaglemont) but then VicRail decided we were not late enough and so we stopped all stations from there arriving at Clifton Hill 45 late. This was maintained until Parliament where I got off. I did notice that the train was now only '6 late' as the indicator (VDU) listed the train as a 09 20 Flinders St rather than an 08 41. (I also heard that the troubles for some passengers were not over as the train stood at the exit of the Loop for quite some time before docking at Spencer St).

In a previous *Newsrail* the 'problem' of the 16 50 Traralgon and the 16 50 Hurstbridge Down pass. needing to cross paths was discussed. This problem has now been 'solved' by VicRail. The 16 50 Hurstbridge is now the 16 51. Now all they have to do is to get the Traralgon pass. to leave on time.

On 16.2, the 17 23 Down Hurstbridge ran as a 3 car Comeng set. Although it was very hot outside and the train quite crowded, the airconditioning worked very well and maintained comfortable conditions with the car. In this regard VicRail should be congratulated for a successful design. (PJS)

S307 powers a late running 9103 goods into Gerang Gerung on Mon.4.1.82. (Greg King)



Traffic

WARRNAMBOOL LINE AND BRANCHES

Steamrail to Camperdown: On 13.2, Steamrail ran a fully booked Vintage Train to Camperdown. T321, T405, 37AW, 35AW, 40ABU, 32ABU, 3ABE, 62BW, 27C arrived Camperdown 13 37 (84 minutes late) after a delay at Newport to detach a carriage which had developed a hot box. Most passengers went by one of the six buses which were provided for a tour of the Port Campbell coast line while others enjoyed the sights and sounds of Camperdown. Due to the late arrival, the scheduled 16 40 departure was re-timed for 17 30, but late running buses caused further delays as the train had to be shunted clear to allow No.8280 pass. to run through. No.8280 consisting of B76, B67, 3BCE, 1AS, 50BES, 57BE, 30ACN, 29BRN, 28BN passed through with a brief pause for intending passengers. The Vintage Train eventually departed at 18 30. The late departure provided a bonus extra selling time for the WDSRS sales department which was doing excellent trading.

Fire damage to main line: The recent fires in the Panmure - Terang area have severely damaged the railway line in two places between the two towns. The line was closed beyond Terang after the arrival of No.8234 pass. at Warrnambool on 16.2. Noted in Warrnambool yard on Fri.25.2 were: B61, Y130, T396 along with carriage set N10 consisting of 30ACN, 29BRN and 28BN. There are also a number of goods wagons there. Y130 has journeyed to Dennington now and again, and T396 has headed east with sleepers on occasions. Damage to the line is one section of about five kilometres between Garvoc overpass and Terang and another section of similar length between Garvoc and Panmure. Work to be done before reopening includes sleeper replacement (variously estimated at numbers ranging from 6000 to 12,500) and culvert reconstructions. (WDSRS)

SERVICETON LINE AND BRANCHES

CTC work creates industrial dispute: As reported in last month's *Newsrail* the CTC project on the main Western line is causing some industrial headaches for VicRail. Train controllers at Ararat are reluctant to leave Ararat to take up residence in Melbourne to man the new CTC signalling. To make sure their feelings were known to VicRail management a stop work meeting was held on Fri.4.3 which stopped most interstate freight trains for some hours. Fortunately some progress has since been made on the issue and hopefully future industrial action will not be necessary.

Balmoral line still in the news: Whilst the former Balmoral line has been closed for many years there is still the occasional call to upgrade and reopen the line. The latest call comes from the Chairman of the Port of Portland Authority who has suggested that the line should be reopened and upgraded to reduce the load on the single line through Hamilton. The Grain Elevators Board is dramatically improving its terminal facilities at Portland. The first stage will increase the shiploading rate to 750 tonnes per hour. The second stage will raise this figure to about 1500 tonnes per hour. The demand for grain will place a heavy burden on the existing line from Ararat to Portland. The reopening of the Balmoral line will ease the burden on

the Hamilton line. However VicRail recognises the shortcomings of the single line and steps have already been taken to upgrade and relay the line from Ararat to Portland. Longer crossing loops will be a subsequent feature of the line. (PM)

Stawell sightings: The following trains were observed passing through Stawell on the dates shown:

Fri.4.2: Locos X53, S303, S302; Up pass. with 5 vehicles.

Sat.5.2: Locos C505, S312, T397; Up Jet with 30 bogie vehicles.

Mon.7.2: Locos T372, T387, T401, T348; Up goods with 40 vehicles.

Wed.9.2: Locos T387, T327, T335; Up goods with 20 vehicles. This train picked up wagon, WTT31 stencilled "weighbridge fitters only".

Sat.19.2: S306, S304, B80; Up Horsham pass. with 3 cars. S304, S306, T381, T397; on Down Jet with 24 bogie vehicles at 19 50.

S301, T329, T406; Up goods with 25 vehicles at 21 15.

Tues.22.2: X50, T386, T353; on Up goods with 63 vehicles at 21 12. (PM)

Train accused of lighting fires: Sat.19.2, saw services at Stawell thrown into disarray when a Down Jet was red flagged by signalmen as it sped through Stawell. Reports had been made that it had caused three fires between Ararat and Stawell. The train hauled by S304, S306, T381 and T397 finally stopped on the Down side of Stawell at 19 50. It was reversed into No.2 road completely occupying it, where the problem was diagnosed as sticking brakes on a VOCX wagon. At 21 15 an Up goods hauled by S301, T329, T406, was allowed into No.3 road, its locos needing to venture onto lines extension because the points leading to No.2 road and the main line were blocked by the Down Jet. The Down Dimboola pass. hauled by S313 arrived at 21 45. It was followed by a C class hauled Jet which passed through at 22 20. The Up goods then reversed on to the main line and departed at 22 30. The offending VOCX wagon was finally removed, the Down Jet allowed to depart at 23 20, two and a half hours after it had arrived. Incidentally the fires, if they existed, were very minor. (PM)

Dimboola pass. sightings: The following locomotives have been sighted on the morning Up Dimboola pass. through Stawell. This train has reverted to running late again. The time varies between 10 to 20 minutes late. The reason is probably the relaying operation which is currently located between Horsham and Murtoa. During the month of February the train always composed of a 3 car N set with one or two VLPY vans.

Wed.2.2: X53. Thurs.17.2: S312, S305.

Thurs.3.2: X53. Fri.18.2: X49, X50.

Fri.4.2: X53, S303, 302. Sat.19.2: X49, X52.

Sat.5.2: X43, 53. Mon.21.2: S313.

Mon.7.2: S313. Tues.22.2: X53.

Tues.8.2: S307, X43. Thurs.24.2: X52, X50.

Wed.9.2: S304. Sat.26.2: X52, S305.

Thurs.10.2: S307, S304. Mon.28.2: S313.

Sat.12.2: X50, S315.

Mon.14.2: S313.

Tues.15.2: X52, X49.

Wed.16.2: X49, X50.

(PM)

BENDIGO LINE AND BRANCHES

Rice harvest down: A significant drop in the forthcoming rice harvest is expected which will affect the amount of bulk rail traffic available from Echuca and Deniliquin. Recent surveys have indicated that the 1983 harvest will yield about 500,000 tonnes of rice compared to about 850,000 tonnes last year. The drought has obviously had a major effect on the harvest potential. (FS)

Castlemaine tourist railway: This tourist railway planned to run from Castlemaine to Maldon and worked by steam locomotives has been given the go ahead, so says a local newspaper article. The go ahead however is on the condition the Society meets tough but essential financial and safety conditions. The State Government emphasised that it would not be prepared to finance the line as a condition of tourist railways was that they are self-supporting. The Society have at their disposal a K class loco and several passenger cars. The group would like to see the line operating by June next year, the time of the line's 100th anniversary.

Echuca events:

Wed.9.2: Y161 stabled in Echuca yard at 16 00. 4 AOOX wagons of grain in the yard! Imported wagons of grain have been a regular feature during February.

Wed.16.2: Y162 stabled, Y165, 52RT pilots at 16 30. Three VQFX petrol wagons at the local Caltex depot. The footpath across the line at this point has been duplicated on the oil depot road so that pedestrians have a path when 3 tankers are unloading. If there are only 2 tankers here the original footpath is used. Only Caltex and Amoco using rail for petroleum delivery.

Thurs.17.2: Y148, Y162 left on a Up goods at 16 30. About half the consist was sleepers in G and VOWA wagons. Y165 stabled.

Fri.18.2: Y165 in yard at 12 30. Locos Y163 and 165 left on Up goods at 16 30.

Mon.21.2: T392, Y162, Y165 with load of VOOX, G, 3 VTQAs, VOWA, VLCX, G, 51 containers and van left as Up goods at 17 25.

Tues.22.2: Y161 and 163 in yard at 12 30. These locos left on an Up goods at 17 00 with load of VHWA, CA, U, G, VOCA, VOWA, VOCX, VLCX, AOOX, VTQA, VBAY, 14 containers, and ZLP van. Four AOOXs of imported grain being unloaded.

Wed.23.2: Y161, 162, 163, on Up goods at 17 00. Y165 stabled in yard.

Thurs.24.2: Y161 pilot at 12 30. T and Y class stabled in yard. Y161, 165 left on Up goods at 17 30 with load 3 Ls of sheep, G, VLEX, VBAY, VOCX, and about 40 containers.

Fri.25.2: Y161 stabled. Y162, 163, 165 left on Up goods at 16 50.

Mon.28.2: Y161 and T406 in yard at 13 00. Up goods hauled by Y161, 163, 165, left at 16 55 with load of 2 VTQY, AOOX, VLBY, VOCX, 39 containers, and CP van. (FS)

ALBURY LINE AND BRANCHES

Bandiana stockyards proceed: Over \$1 million is being spent on developing new stockyards at Bandiana near Wodonga. The yard is expected to be in use by the middle of the year. As an indirect benefit the Victorian Government believes that the yard will create at least 100 new jobs. Part of the old Cudgewa line was used to connect the yard with both broad and standard gauge track. VicRail will benefit too, with increased numbers of livestock being railed in and out of the area and less handling will be a real incentive to move livestock by rail. The repositioning of the yards from almost the centre of the City will be welcomed by the people of Wodonga who have pushed for its removal from residential areas for many years.

X54 speeds through Burrumbeet with the then 1615 Down Dimboola pass. on Mon.4.1.82. (Greg King)



S301 hauls a Down Geelong goods out of Little River at 12 20 on the 13.12.82. (Paul Jordan)



Informal train information: Radio station 3SR continues to broadcast train information in an informal manner. The following broadcasts heard by a reader. Fri.11.2: Loco X33 on Up Numurkah pass. with drivers Lance and Thompsy. Numurkah to Shepparton with "handbrake Harry" the guard. From Shepparton Brian will be the driver and Wishbone the guard.

Mon.14.2: Loco X40 on the Up Numurkah pass.

Tues.15.2: B76 on the Up Numurkah pass. with drivers Norm and Chris. The Up Albury pass. hauled by S306 and S313 with driver Rocco to Benalla and then driver Dunn from Benalla.

Thurs.17.2: B72 on the Up Numurkah pass. with Norm and Chris driving and Bill the guard. At Shepparton Jim and Shane took over. The *Spirit of Progress* 50 minutes late.

Mon.21.2: X42 on the Up Albury pass. and loco B72 on the Up Numurkah pass.

Mon.28.2: Radio station 3SR gave away a VR driver's cap to first listener who sent in the number of the

loco which was on the Up Numurkah pass. The offer was made just after the announcer gave the train information. Loco B81 on the Up Numurkah and S311 on the Up Albury pass. (FS)

EASTERN DISTRICT LINES

Warragul report: On Sat.8.1, the Down *Gippslander* arrived at Warragul at 10 20 (26 late) with two L classes on eight cars and a van. L class 1150 (tangerine) was the first loco followed by a blue L class, tangerine first class car, *Moorabool* (blue), tangerine economy car thence red cars — a motley collection of colours. On Fri.25.2 a plant train with a large number of camp huts passed on the Up through Warragul behind two T class locos.

A refurbished BE car (airconditioned) is running regularly on Traralgon line trains (recoded as 51AE). A refurbished BS car is also appearing on Gippsland line trains numbered 1BS in tangerine colours. (CR)

The crew on T337 change staffs at Melton while running 14 30 Up Bacchus Marsh service on a rare wet day, Thurs.9.12.82. The 14 05 Down Bacchus Marsh waits in No.2 road ready to depart. (Paul Jordan)



Works

GENERAL

Jung: On 15.2.83, Jung was disestablished as a Staff Station. The Electric Staff Sections, Murtoa - Jung and Jung - Horsham were abolished and replaced in lieu by an Electric Staff Section, Murtoa - Horsham. All signals at Jung were abolished and the points spiked normal.

Tarranginnie: On 16.2.83, the Up end catch points were replaced by a rodged derail block and wheel crowders. (A156/83, WN8/1983)

Parwan: On 15.2.83, the dead end extension at the Up end of No.2 track at Parwan was reduced by 110 metres. Work has commenced at Parwan on a new longer crossing loop to be eventually part of the CTC system on the Ballarat line. Work has started on formation work with rocks and earth having been compacted alongside the line on the Up side of the station.

Werribee electrification: Wires on Down line about ½ mile short of Werribee platform; on Up line-top wire past platform, down to old sheep platform. Top wire also in place over pointwork. Bottom wire on Up line about a mile past Hopper's Crossing station. New Hopper's Crossing station nearing completion — platform ready, buildings nearly finished. New signals installed. Werribee underground station well advanced, while on 6.2, Y110 and Y112 arrived with concrete sleepers and lengths of rail for the new third platform track. On 23.2, digging began so the gravel could be laid as the foundation for this track. Signals are installed, as are the points.

Box Hill station: Rails and sleepers were delivered to the Box Hill Transport Centre in early December. Tracklaying commenced during January, the Up track has been laid for almost the entire length of the cutting, using wooden sleepers, while the Down track has been only partially laid. That part of the Down track laid on the concrete slab uses concrete sleepers, the remainder uses wooden sleepers. The northern abutment of the Station St bridge is now being constructed, while the steel piles supporting the centre of the bridge have been encased in reinforced concrete. The future Up platform is complete except for final surfacing. (DSG)

Further CTC work: Whilst steady progress is being made on the CTC project between Ararat and Serviceton, VicRail recently announced that approval has been granted for CTC work to start from Sunshine to Ararat. This part of the project will of course be subject to continued funds being made available. The planned time frame is:

1. Sunshine - Ballarat East — Civil works commence 1983/84, signalling works mid 1984, complete mid 1985.
2. Linton Junction - Ararat — Civil works commence 1984/85, signalling works late 1985, complete 1986.
3. Ballarat East - Linton Junction — This area requires extensive resignalling work and will be done after the main CTC work is completed.

The project is an extensive one and requires a great deal of investigation but the scheme, when implemented, will mean real benefits in operation and staff

requirements. The intense competition facing VicRail from road operators between Melbourne and Adelaide demands that modern technology be introduced to win new freight and passenger customers.

Ringwood - Croydon duplication: In March's edition of *Newsrail* we mentioned the opening of the second track between Ringwood and Croydon. A reader has supplied some details of the construction work leading up to the opening stage and this information is repeated here.

After a decade and more of pre-election promises-promises and minor earth works in recent years the long awaited Ringwood - Croydon duplication made major progress in early 1983. In rapid succession an additional track bed was constructed, steel overhead stanchions erected and concrete sleepers placed on the Ringwood - Ringwood East new Up line. Track laying commenced on 7.2 and continued in 40°C heat with hired mobile cranes and associated modern labour-saving equipment. Dublin Rd level-crossing was closed on Sun.20.2 while rails were laid in position. Whilst a concrete slab maintenance saving road surface was installed between the rails of the existing track last year the new line was levelled with bitumen which immediately demonstrated its unsuitability within 24 hours when heavy vehicles mashed up the surface in hot weather. Due to high embankments beyond Ringwood East a new Down track is being constructed at least in some locations. Erection of overhead wiring began on 2.3. Work on the whole project has been expedited by the fact that train services between Ringwood and Croydon were suspended each weekday for 6 hours after the morning peak for about 6 weeks since early February and passengers transferred by buses. (POT)

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GENERAL

Apex train fails: At about 16 30 on Tues.1.2, the Down Apex train, headed by S307, T408 failed at Hughesdale, blocking Poath Rd until 17 10. At 17 00, an empty silver¹ train, (43M, 1009T, 125M, 229M, 1006T, 227M) arrived from Murrumbidgee, coupled up, and pushed the defective goods into a siding at Oakleigh. Traralgon pass. 8423 passed 10 minutes late, and delays up to an hour were experienced by suburban trains. At 17 00, S304 and T347 had arrived to take the train on its way, and the silver set was still stabled behind the goods. The failure is believed to have been caused by burnt-out traction motors. (KH)

Disrupted Eastern line trains: On Tues.8.2, with extensive fires in the Haunted Hills area the Gippsland line trains were severely disrupted. The Up *Gippslander* was sighted passing through Yarragon (with carriage lights on) at 21 30 — due out of Warragul at 16 11. The fire attack train was despatched from Melbourne and was pushed in the Down direction through the Haunted Hills, spraying water. Most sleepers were burning and passenger trains for Traralgon stabled at Moe overnight. The next day there was still a passenger set at Warragul at midday. Trains returned to normal later in the day although speed restrictions between Moe and Morwell caused much late running due to damaged track. (CR)

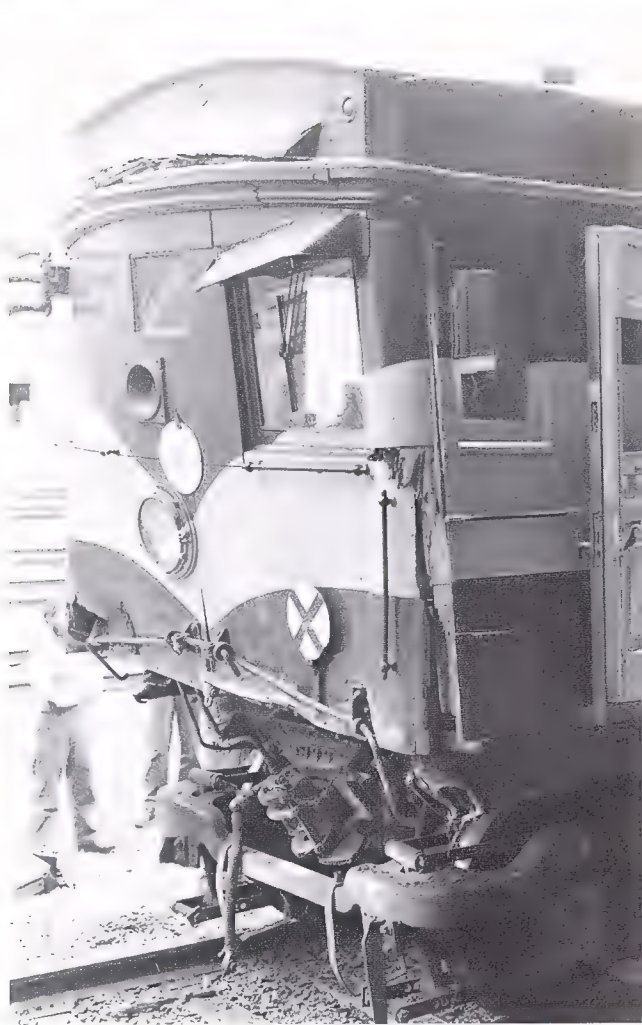
Fire havoc: Wed.16.2 will long be remembered as a day of tragedy for Victoria. On this day the temperature soared to 43° and huge bushfires took the lives of 46 Victorians. VicRail was certainly not immune to the effects of the fires and several lines were damaged for miles. The first line to be closed was the Traralgon line when bushfires raced across the tracks burning sleepers and destroying signalling cables. Service on the line was suspended at 18 20 and then reopened again with single line working early the following morning. Twenty buses were used to transport people between Dandenong and Pakenham. Next to go was the Warrnambool line when track was damaged between Terang and Panmure. The line was closed for almost two days and buses ran services. By far the worst hit however was the Bendigo line when about 12 mile of track was severely damaged between Woodend and Riddells Creek. To compound this problem the fire damaged a bridge near Macedon requiring services to be suspended for two days while repairs were effected. The Bendigo line services was hit by delays for almost a fortnight while repairmen worked flat out to repair burnt sleepers and bridge damage. The bridge was repaired on a Down line, Up line basis with single line working introduced alternatively to allow repairs to be carried out.

Services on the main western line were also effected by tragic fires which hit the Adelaide hills between Bridgewater and Bahannah forcing the line to be closed. The Melbourne bound *Overland* was replaced by buses that night. The Adelaide bound train terminated at Serviceton and passengers transferred. As well as delays caused by fires, services were disrupted by a shunters' dispute the same day when they walked off the job because of the excessive heat.

Light engines derailed: On Fri.18.2, just on the Up side of Bacchus Marsh as the line commences to start the S curves, two light engines, C510 and Y139 were derailed — all wheels, both bogies. The incident occurred at 17 53 and rerailing took until 02 25. Ballarat and local Bacchus Marsh trains were terminated at Parwan and buses substituted. All freight trains, the *Overland* and the Down *Vineland* were routed via North Geelong. The first train through the effected area was the Up *Vineland*.

S.O.P. delayed by can opener: On Mon.21.2, departure of the 18 45 Down *Spirit of Progress* was delayed for 9 minutes owing to a lack of a can opener in the VRS buffet car. After the essential piece of equipment (one can opener) duly arrived from the catering complex, the train departed with X46 hauling 9 cars for 499 tonnes.

11CM broke its nose when it went the wrong way at the Spencer St parcels dock and slammed into a solid concrete buffer. 10.3.83. (Ken Williams)



Aurora late: On Sun.27.2, X46 on the 20 00 Down *Southern Aurora* came to a halt at 22 55 about 100 metres north of Wangaratta platform with a seized armature bearing. X46 was a total failure and assistance was sought from 42213 which was at Albury, the nearest loco to the breakdown. It arrived light engine at 01 00 and after coupling to X46 proceeded to push the train back to Alumutta loop. Here X46 was uncoupled and placed in the cripple road at the Down end. Loco 42213 rejoined the train and departed at 02 17. Arrival at Albury was at 03 06 — 3 hours 16 minutes late. 42213 was replaced by 42212 and 42204 for the run to Sydney while Alco 4454 shunted the two Motorail wagons to the rear of the train. The train's load was 10 cars including the Motorail wagons for 451 tonnes. Albury was left at 03 25 — 3 hours 35 minutes late. (CG)

B69's oil leak: On Thurs.17.2 the 14 30 Up Geelong pass. terminated at Werribee at about 15 05, after orange loco B69 began leaking oil. The leak came from a small pipe located beside the fuel tank, immediately behind the leading bogie. While it was a steady trickle, trickling and splashing oil along the trackside, it also sprayed — all over the fuel tank, over the rear half of B69's side, and on the side of 37CE, 13AE, 30BE, 2BE — even the last car, 33BE received black spots along one side. The following Up Warrnambool express, which passes through Werribee at about 15 30 stopped to take on these passengers. Orange, radio-equipped B81 hauled the consist of orange parcels van, and 36ACN, 35BRN, 23BN, which were crowded. At 15 50, radio-equipped T404 arrived to assist, hauling B69 and the empty carriages towards Melbourne at 16 00 with B69 still leaking oil.

"Removing an obstruction" as the XPT waits during its demonstration run to Seymour loop last year. Many hands make light work after a railfan decided to drive where he should not have and blocked everything. (J Buckland)



Rollingstock

GENERAL

Sleeping car ARJ841: On Mon.31.3, *Indian Pacific* sleeping car ARJ841 was in the consist of the Up *Southern Aurora*. (DSG)

FH wagon: Like the GH, this wagon is converted from a GY wagon, and is of similar style to the GH, except that it has a lower profile hood top, and is stencilled on the side, "Super Phosphate Traffic Only". FH1 is at the time of writing, sitting at Castlemaine yard, and is painted in the red/brown colour scheme. (BR)

BW cars as trailers: The use of BW class cars as railcar trailers appears to have become a fairly common practice recently. On Wed.5.1, 56RM-42BW were being used on the Werribee service, as were 60RM-7BW on 13.1.83. Other days have seen similar combinations. (DSG)

E class at Bayswater: At about noon on Thurs.17.2, class leader E1102 was at the head of a very short freight (*VBBY-ZL*) in Bayswater yard. This was the first time I have seen an E class on this line for some months — T class locos are now usual. (DSG)

AN van CD2: One of the pass. sets for the Eastern region includes AN van CD2. On Tues.8.2, the 16 50 Down Traralgon consist was L1150, CD2, 3AS, 32BW, 26BW, 17BE. The CD van had chalked on the

side "The Overlander from Traralgon to Melbourne". Van CD2 was still around on 28.2 — on the Up pass. due Melbourne at 16 52. (PJS)

VicRail's B and T class rebuilds: The B class rebuilds are all to be done at Clyde in Rosewater and the thirteen T rebuilds at Martin & King at Somerton. All the Ts will be drawn from the first batch, i.e. the "flat top" variation built originally to US drawings, and will be rebuilt with high cab and low nose similar to later Ts and will include an auxiliary Detroit (GM) diesel alternator set located in the No.2 end under the fans to provide head end power for Harris-conversion country cars. Of the Bs, recent receipts at Rosewater have been B71 on 29.1.83, B77 on 14.2.83, and class leader B60 was expected on 3.3.83. (DB)

Ararat depot:

Sun.6.2: S304, 305, T331, 348, 372, 375, 399, 401, 404, W263, Y141, 156, 160.

Sun.13.2: S308, T331, 353, 356, 381, 395, 403, 406, W263, Y139, 156, 159, 160.

Sun.20.2: S301, T329, 335, 343, 353, 366, 385, 389, W263, Y151, 158, 159, 160. (PM)

Tait car 417T: Just before noon on Mon.7.3, Tait car 417T passed through Dandenong. It was however not on the steel "thruway" but on the back of a road truck heading down Princes Hwy. (IC)

S304 rolls out of Bendigo Loco after being turned on 11.6.82. (F Sutton)



Victorian X class in NSW: The use of Victorian X class locomotives in NSW as part of the SRA/STA's reciprocal through working arrangement, has created a sudden interest for many NSW rail photographers. Hardly a morning passes in the countryside from Picton to Menangle without at least one photographer out to record the delights of "multi-cultural" locomotive power at the head of No.2 *Southern Aurora* and No.4 *Spirit of Progress* expresses. (And some days its photoline conditions!) Through working officially started on the night of Sat.13.11.82, when X45 left Spencer St with the very first regular interstate express service, which arrived in Sydney the following morning.

Although nominally restricted to the *Southern Aurora* and *Spirit of Progress* services, there has been one movement recorded so far when X54 worked into Sydney with No.6 *Intercapital Daylight* (Sat.19.12.82). When returning on No.65 *Daylight* the next day, the unit failed near Picton, was replaced, and the following No.35 Goulburn-bound passenger worked by 8007, collected the stranded X, and dead-hauled it to Goulburn depot. It later worked an early morning Melbourne-bound freight out of that city.

Another interesting working presented itself on Mon.29.11.82, when X51 was rostered ex-Goulburn as sole motive power on No.20 *Southern Highlands Express* (all stations). It had been taken off No.3 *Spirit of Progress* the previous evening when the oncoming driver could not read how much fuel was in the tank.

Since no one handy had the tool to remove the fuel cap, the unit was removed in the interests of timekeeping.

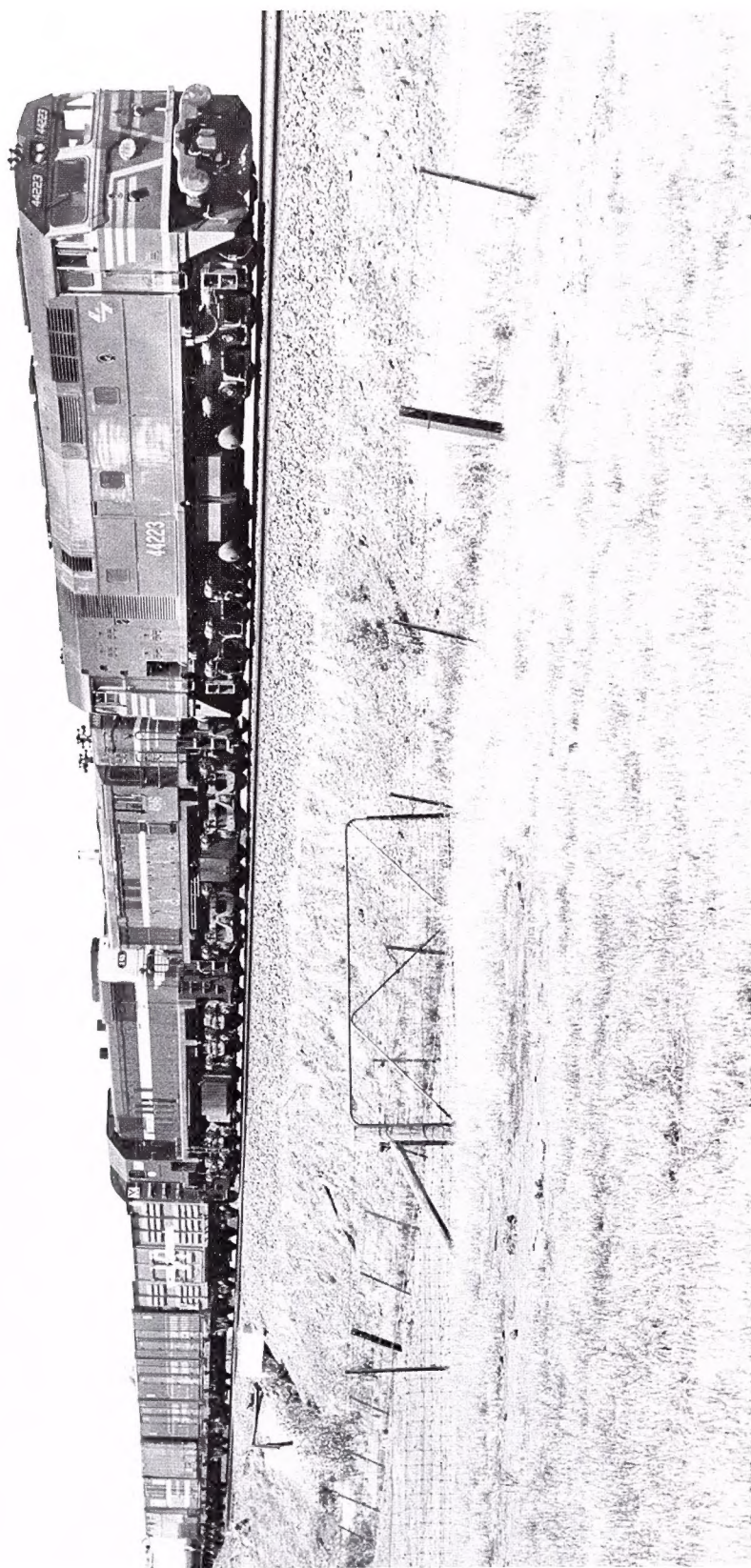
Other X class failures in the Goulburn/Yass area since then have presented interesting locomotive workings, but more often than not they appear in the early hours of the morning when it is virtually impossible to secure a photograph. For instance, an X, taken off an express in Goulburn late in January, is reported to have found its way into Marulan South limestone quarry around 13 00, to dead haul a failed AN rail 600 class Alco, stranded at that point with a heavy limestone drag, Port Kembla steelworks bound. It is believed that the X only went as far as Moss Vale where more suitable replacements had been arranged.

The use of the Victorian locomotives has so far interested many NSW enthusiasts, just as much as the SRA's locomotives have in "Mexico". And, more than a handful are waiting with bated breath the hope that S class will also reappear (remember, they were all delivered over NSW rails) in due course. (LO)

Opposite: Another X class failure in the Goulburn area was X45 on the 12.1.83, the result of a traction motor failure. Here we see it being hauled to Albury by NSWRA Alco units 44223 and 48146 as part of No.1491 south goods. The location is near Joppa Junction. (Leon Oberg)

Below: One of the first X class to visit Goulburn Loco was X54 after failing near Picton while running the Melbourne bound *Intercapital Daylight* on Sun.18.12.82. Here we see it greeted by (from left) 4474, 48157, 42201, 4429, 48106, 48149 and 7316. (Leon Oberg)







READER'S QUERY

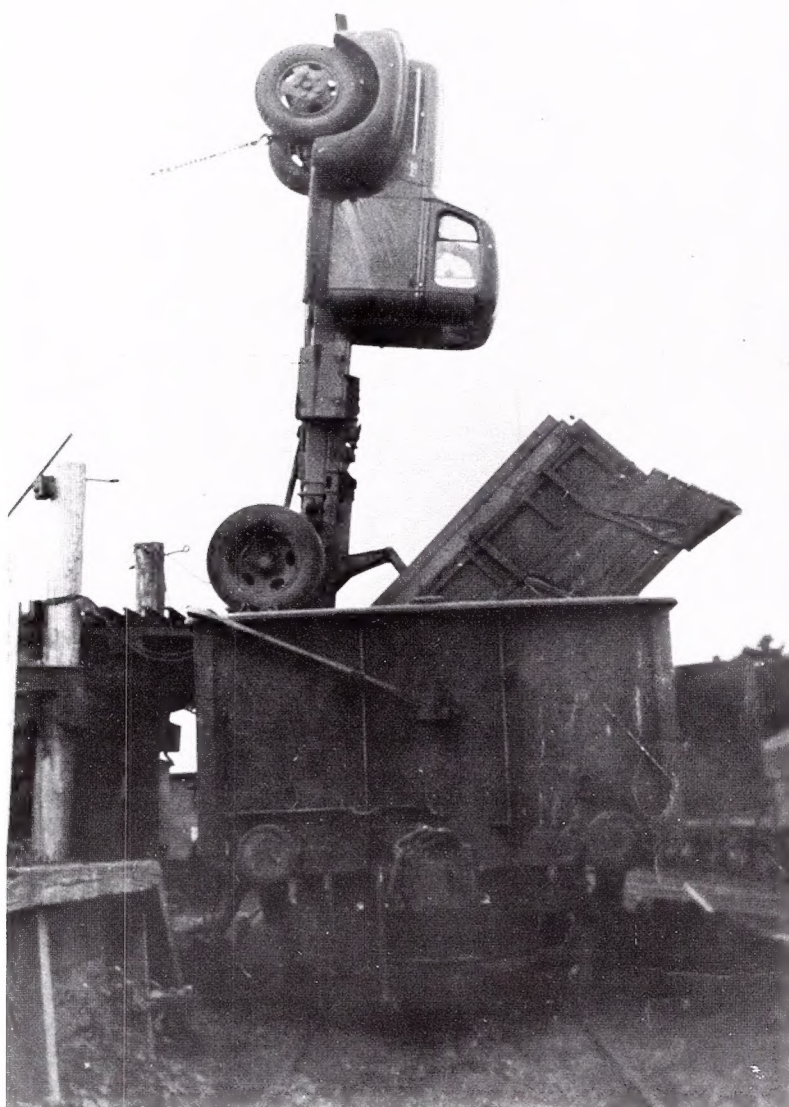
Rollingstock: Would any reader know where I could possibly find the whereabouts of the following rollingstock to enable me to get a photograph of each: KCC, KPW, KW, MBK, N, WM — and also where the following vehicles usually operate, or could be found at anytime: FCF (FQDY), FPX (VFMS), JDX (VHDK), JQX (VHGX), JSX (VHSX), ELX (VOEX), ELX (VOVX). Could you please send correspondence to B. Race, 559 Hargreaves St, Bendigo, 3550.

RAILWAY QUIZ

Last month's answer: One class suburban travel was introduced by VicRail on 14th September, 1958.

This month's question: The first steam hauled train in Victoria ran on 12th September, 1854. In what year was the first plan of a railway submitted?

"Porter Jones, I know it fits but that is not the way to stow a tip truck in a GY." A mishap at Winchelsea, mid-1950s. (Photo courtesy of Mr Ian Hole)





D774 makes easy work as it rolls along the now closed Warburton line and approaches Launching Place, 1916. (W H Wells)

BOOK REVIEW

B.H.P. Locomotives: compiled by David Griffiths
 Railmac Publications No. 25, 32 pp. Recommended price \$2.90.

This latest in the established Railmac Locomotive Series to come to this reviewer's notice might best be described as something of a 'dog's breakfast' as it encompasses the entire corporate conglomerate of 'The Big Australian' in one hit! The booklet, which as a production is of similar format and standard to this publisher's previous booklets, attempts to cover the entire corporate subsidiaries, however remote from the Company's main concern with the Australian steel industry.

As however, the principal subsidiary — Australian Iron & Steel Pty. Ltd. — operates as integrated industry entirely separate from and independent of the other entities in the Group, I marvel at its inclusion when it surely merits separate from and independent of the other entities in the Group, I marvel at its inclusion when it surely merits separate treatment? Be that as it may, the Company's operations at Whyalla, S.A. and the smaller wholly or partly-owned subsidiaries in association with its Newcastle steelworks, as also its interest in the cement industry are covered, legitimately enough, giving the relevant specifications and livery details.

But to attempt to cover in this manner the Company's main and entirely separate and independent line-haul operation — Mount Newman Mining Railway — in this booklet is to fail to do the subject justice. There is, however, a bibliography of suggested reading and a list of B.H.P. steam locomotives which have been preserved for posterity, which is as far ranging as the Company's varied interests. Surprisingly, the final two pages feature steam loco pictures.

At the modest price the booklet provides a handy record, but could not by any stretch of imagination be considered the definitive title on such a varied subject. (Mainline '83)

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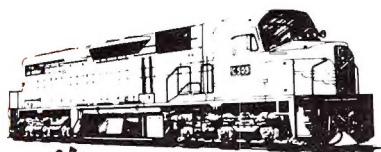
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